

United States Government

Department of Energy
Oak Ridge Operations Office

memorandum

DATE: October 18, 2001

REPLY TO


ATTN OF: AD-442:Brown

SUBJECT: **ANTHRAX AND SMALLPOX FACTS**

TO: All ORO, YAO, OSTI, and Contractor Employees

The attached information, received from the Tennessee Department of Health, is being provided after the Occupational Health Nurse received numerous telephone calls and questions regarding Anthrax and Smallpox.

If you have any questions, you may contact the Immunization Hotline at 1-800-232-2522.


Patricia Howse-Smith, Director
Human Resources Division

Attachment

Smallpox and Anthrax Fact Sheet 9/27/01

Tennessee Department of Health

Smallpox

1. Smallpox is a highly contagious viral infection that causes a severe rash and death in 30% of cases. It was declared eradicated worldwide by WHO in 1980. There have been no cases since late 1977.
2. There are concerns that some of the remaining smallpox virus, stored in laboratories at CDC and Russia, could have been stolen and made available to terrorists.
3. There is no specific treatment for smallpox beyond supportive care.
4. The smallpox vaccine has not been used routinely in the United States since 1971.
5. Smallpox vaccine immunity wanes over time. Most people vaccinated in this country are no longer immune
6. The smallpox vaccine is a live virus preparation of infectious vaccinia virus.
7. The smallpox vaccine is about 93% effective in preventing smallpox. It can prevent severe disease if given within a week after exposure.
8. There is a limited stockpile of smallpox vaccine (15.4 million doses) at the CDC.
9. There are no recommendations for the use of the vaccine in the general public. The only people who currently receive the vaccine are a very few laboratory workers. This vaccine is not currently available to physicians, the general public or the Department of Health.
10. The current supply will only be used in the event of an outbreak/bioterrorist event.
11. A new vaccine is being developed and should be available in 2003.

Anthrax

1. Anthrax is a bacterial infection that causes mediastinal hemorrhage and death in most victims who are not treated early with antibiotics. It has spore form that has been weaponized and could be distributed as an aerosol.
2. Disease can be prevented or treated with commonly available antibiotics (doxycycline or ciprofloxacin) if given soon after exposure.
3. The vaccine is manufactured by Biopart in Michigan. The plant is currently undergoing renovation. Production is expected to resume in October. The number of doses available and their location is not known.
4. There are no recommendations for the use of the vaccine in the general public. Vaccination is currently indicated for military personnel, certain laboratory workers or persons handling imported animal hides. This vaccine is not currently available to physicians, the general public or the Department of Health.
5. The vaccine is not licensed for children under age 18 years and adults over age 65.
6. The vaccine is likely to be effective in inhaled anthrax exposures but it has only been tested in animal models.
7. The vaccine and antibiotics will be used together in the event of an inhalational/bioterrorist exposure, if sufficient vaccine is available.
8. The National Pharmaceutical Stockpile contains doxycycline and ciprofloxacin but no vaccines at this time.